

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 7156

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CG, IS, UN

SUBJ: MOBUTU ON ISRAELI EXPULSION FROM THE UN

REF: KINSHASA 7059

1. PRESIDENT MOBUTU RETURNED FROM THE OAU SUMMIT IN KAMPALA THE AFTERNOON OF AUG 1. I MET WITH HIS SENIOR ADVISOR, BISENGIMANA, A FEW HOURS LATER. BISENGIMANA SAID HE HAD ONLY A FEW MINUTES BRIEFING FROM MOBUTU ON THE ISRAELI QUESTION ON THE WAY IN FROM THE AIRPORT AND INTENDED TO GET A FULL RUN-DOWN LATER, WHICH HE PROMISED TO RELAY TO ME. BUT THE TIDBITS HE DID PICK UP WERE VERY INTERESTING.

2. BISENGIMANA SAID THAT MOBUTU'S INTERVENTION AGAINST THE MOVE TO PASS A RESOLUTION AIMING AT EXPULSION OF ISRAEL FROM THE UN HAD COMPLETELY "DISORGANIZED" THE CONFERENCE. ONCE MOBUTU, WHOSE LEAD IN BREAKING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL HAD BEEN FOLLOWED BY SO MANY AFRICAN STATES, SPOKE AGAINST EXPULSION ONE AFTER ANOTHER OF THE CHIEFS OF STATE AT KAMPALA CHANGED THEIR POSITION, WHICH THE ARABS HAD SO CAREFULLY NURTURED; BISENGIMANA ADDED THAT QADHAFI WAS FURIOUS AND BROKE IN TO THREATENED A CUTOFF OF AID FROM LIBYA. OTHER AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE

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(UNNAMED) RETORTED THAT IF QADHAFI THOUGHT HIS MONEY WAS THE

REASON THEY HAD EARLIER TAKEN A PRO-ARAB POSITION, HE COULD STUFF IF. ACCORDING TO BISENGIMANA, QADHAFI THEN WALKED OUT OF THE CONFERENCE AND WENT DIRECTLY TO THE AIRPORT, LEAVING SOME BAGGAGE-HANDLERS TO GET HIS THINGS AT THE HOTEL.

3. BISENGIMANA THEN SAID THAT MOBUTU'S MOVE WAS NOT A WHIM, BUT RATHER WAS CONSISTENT WITH ZAIRE'S VERY RATIONAL AND LONG STANDING POLICY: ZAIRE BELIEVED THAT ISRAEL HAD BEEN UN-REASONABLE AND THAT ACTION HAD TO BE TAKEN TO SHOW THAT THERE WERE COSTS FOR SUCH A HARD LINE. THUS THE BREAKING OF RELATIONS AND THE SUBSEQUENT SUPPORT FOR THE ARAB LINE. BUT THAT DID NOT MEAN THAT ZAIRE WOULD GO ALONG WITH IRRATIONAL STEPS VIS-A-VIS ISRAEL. MOBUTU SEES THAT ISRAEL MUST REMAIN IN THE UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA BECAUSE--AS IN THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA BISENGIMANA ADDED -- "THEY MUST BE THERE SO THEY CAN HEAR WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY."

4. BISENGIMANA'S RATIONALE CONTINUED TO INCLUDE WHAT HE SAID WAS MOBUTU'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRENT CRITICAL PHASE IN THE MIDDLE-EAST NEGOTIATIONS. "NO EXCUSE MUST BE GIVEN TO ISRAEL WHICH WOULD ALLOW IT TO REFUSE A UN ROLE." BISENGIMANA AT THIS POINT SAID THAT SADAT HAD TRIED TO ENUNCIATE A "MIDDLE POSITION" -- SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT THAT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT BE DEFINITELY EXCLUDED FROM THE UN, BUT THAT PERHAPS SOME "TEMPORARY" SUSPENSION OR OTHER MEASURES MIGHT BE TAKEN. HE WAS NOT CLEAR ON THIS POINT. BUT HE DID SAY THAT THE RESULT AT THE OAU SUMMIT WAS THAT THE PREVIOUS MINISTERIAL LEVEL RESOLUTION FOR ISRAEL'S EXPULSION BECAME A DEAD-LETTER AFTER MOBUTU'S INTERVENTION.

5. THEN CAME THE PUNCH LINE. THE ARABS ARE FURIOUS WITH MOBUTU, HE SAID, AND ANY HOPE WE HAD OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THEM IN OUR TIME OF ECONOMIC CRISIS IS DASHED. MOST IMMEDIATELY, THE ALGERIANS AND THE LIBYANS ARE OUR SUPPLIERS OF CRUDE. EVEN BEFORE THE SUMMIT, WE HAD PROBLEMS SINCE WE OWE THEM \$27 MILLION WE CAN'T PAY. NOW THERE IS NO CHANCE THEY WILL BE HELPFUL.

6. HE PAUSED TO LET THAT SINK IN, BUT BEFORE I COULD COUGH AND CHANGE THE SUBJECT HE SAID ONLY THAT THERE WAS SOME RUMOR
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AT THE SUMMIT THAT VOA OR MAYBE IT WAS THE ISRAELI RADIO HAD REPORTED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD SAID AID WOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM ANY COUNTRY WHICH VOTED FOR ISRAELI EXPULSION. HE QUICKLY WENT ON TO STOP MY INTERJECTION BY SAYING THAT HE DOUBTED THAT THIS WAS TRUE, BUT THAT THE RUMOR WAS INDICATIVE OF THE TROUBLE MOBUTU HAD BROUGHT HIMSELF BY SPEAKING OUT SINCE MANY WERE SAYING THAT IT WAS DUE TO AMERICAN PRESSURE/PROMISES.

7. THAT'S WHAT HE REPORTED FROM "A FEW MINUTES ON THE WAY IN FROM THE AIRPORT." I AWAIT WITH SOME TREPIDATION A FULLER ACCOUNT. THERE WAS NOT A WHIFF OF A DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT MOBUTU'S MOVE AT KAMPALA WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY A NOT-TOO-SUBTLE INFERENCE THAT WE OWED HIM SOMETHING. FAIR ENOUGH. I SUGGEST THAT IN ADDITION TO THE OTHER THINGS WE ARE WORKING ON IN THE IMF FRAMEWORK -- SECRETARY KISSINGER MIGHT SEND A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO MOBUTU. NOT A MESSAGE OF THANKS, BUT RATHER ONE WHICH UNDERLINES OUR RECOGNITION OF MOBUTU'S "CONSISTENT STATESMANSHIP", ZAIRE'S "RATIONAL" LINE, AND ENDS BY CALLING FOR A CONTINUING EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MOBUTU ON THOSE IMPORTANT ISSUES. IT WOULD BE WORTH SEVERAL MILLIONS OF DOLLARS -- AND WOULD ENCOURAGE MOBUTU TO KEEP UP HIS HELPFUL LOBBYING.
WALKER

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